until it closed. Later, they operated the post office, which was located inside the mercantile building. Even though the post office closed in 1944 and the Southern Pacific railroad depot was torn down in 1967, the Heneys managed to hang on for a few more years. They continued to operate the Fairbank Commercial Company and gas station until these businesses closed in the mid 1970s. With the Heneys departure, the town was abandoned.

Today, the building visible on the north side of SR 82, on the western side of Fairbank's main street, is the post office and mercantile. What remains of Fairbank is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as part of its San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area. The BLM and a non-profit organization, The Friends of the San Pedro River, have stabilized or restored several buildings and have developed an interpretive trail through the residential section of Fairbank. A road sign posted along SR 82 invites travelers to visit the restored school house and learn about Fairbank's brief but interesting history.

State Route 82
AND THE
Ghost Town of Fairbank

A Public Outreach Program
Sponsored by FHWA and ADOT

ADOT

Federal Highway Administration

Ghost towns hold a certain fascination. A particular town spring up quickly, exists for a short time, and then fades away when its reason for being no longer exists. Often times, traces of its once vibrant life remain in the form of ruined buildings, stray bits of metal or glass or porcelain, and isolated cemeteries. Evidence for the once-thriving 1880s railroad town of Fairbank, Arizona can be seen along the north side of State Route 82 (SR 82), a few hundred yards east of the San Pedro River.

First known as Junction City in the late 1870s, the settlement started as a stagecoach stop on the way to Tombstone. Later it was referred to as Kendall. When an official Arizona post office was established on May 16, 1883, the town was renamed Fairbank to honor a Chicago merchant, Nathaniel Kellogg Fairbank, who helped finance the first railroad that passed

through the community—the New Mexico & Arizona Railroad (1881–1882). Mr. Fairbank was also a co-owner of the Grand Central Mining Company in Tombstone. The town of Fairbank served as the major shipping point for silver ore from Tombstone, copper ore from Bisbee, and cattle from the ranches of the San Pedro River Valley. The town gained greater prominence when the Phelps Dodge Corporation built the Arizona & South Eastern rail line (1888) to connect with the New Mexico & Arizona Railroad line at Fairbank.

In its heyday in the late 1880s, Fairbank was the home to some 100 residents. The town boasted not only a railroad depot, a stagecoach station, and a post office, but also a general mercantile, a grocery store, a butcher shop, a hotel, three restaurants, five saloons, a Wells Fargo office, livery stables, a school, numerous homes, a cemetery, and a silver-ore stamp mill. In the 1920s, a one-room school

house was constructed, and it served the little community through the late 1930s. In the early 1940s, Works Progress Administration (WPA) laborers used some of the existing buildings and built privies and a stable when they engaged in road construction along SR 82.

In the late 1890s, the citizens of Fairbank discovered that their town was within the boundaries of a Mexican land grant, the San Juan de las Boquillas y Nogales, when the new owners, the Boquillas Land and Cattle Company, received title to 17,035 acres of the original 47,076-acre land grant. Although the company evicted homesteaders on their claim, Fairbank and its residents were allowed to stay.

When SR 82 was taken on as part of the Arizona State highway system in 1927, the informal road passing through the southern section of Fairbank was finally graveled. The improved road, along with a new bridge across the San Pedro, prolonged the life of the settlement. In the 1930s and early 1940s, the town was little more than a gas station and pit stop along the state highway, although the Southern Pacific Railroad, who had purchased the earlier railroads, maintained a station at Fairbank into the 1960s. Among the last remaining residents was the Heney family (see photograph). Arthur and Stacia Heney managed the Fairbank Hotel in the 1930s